



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

THE  
C  
OTTOMAN  
CONVERT.

210. m.

318



600024621L







1. The first part of the document is a list of names and dates.

2.



A MOHAMMEDAN FAMILY,  
From Salonica.  
BAPTIZED AT MALTA IN 1858.

# THE OTTOMAN CONQUEST

## A Narrative of the

and

INTRODUCTION OF

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

INTO TURKEY

"I will give thee strength  
thy right nation shall be  
thy right nation shall be  
thy right nation shall be

ARTHEIM.

AND LONDON.





# THE OTTOMAN CONVERT.

## A Narrative of Facts.

WITH

INTRODUCTORY PREFACE

BY

THE REV. DANIEL WILSON, M.A.,  
VICAR OF ISLINGTON.

---

"I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of  
thy righteousness, even of thine only."—PSA. LXXI. 16.

---

LONDON:

WERTHEIM, MACINTOSH, AND HUNT,  
24, PATERNOSTER-ROW,  
AND 23, HOLLES-STREET, CAVENDISH-SQUARE.

1860.

210. m. 318.

---

LONDON: WERTHEIM, MACINTOSH, AND HUNT,  
24, PATERNOSTER-ROW,  
AND 23, HOLLES-STREET, CAVENDISH-SQUARE.



I.

KIND READER! No fiction of marvellous power  
Here woos thy attention to wile a dull hour ;  
But 'tis marvellous truth, and it comes from afar,  
From the bright, glowing clime of the Crescent and Star!

II.

Though that banner blood-red has long ceased to affright  
The pale Franks with its boastings of Mussulman might,  
Heroes live still, and glorious conflicts there are  
Going on in that land of the Crescent and Star!

III.

If faint is the dawn, and all trembling its ray,  
The mountains are tinged with the saffron of day ;  
There's a sunrise, in rosy light, bathing each hill,  
Though the Star and the Crescent float over them still.

IV.

And 't must come to meridian splendour at last,  
And the Crescent and Star in obscurity cast ;  
For the conquering Cross, in the distance looms proud,  
Shouting, "Peace and goodwill, and to God glory!" loud.

V.

Then, as Christians, let's hail it, and fervently pray  
That the Turks, as a nation, may not pass away ;  
But as brethren join us in our joyous hurrah  
At the Cross rising over their Crescent and Star!



## INTRODUCTORY PREFACE.

---

I HAVE much pleasure in introducing to the public the following pages, which record a remarkable case of conversion from the Moham-medan to the Christian faith. They exhibit the mighty power of the Inspired Volume, when unaccompanied by human teaching, to convince the conscience, instruct the understanding, and lead the inquiring mind from falsehood to truth, and from darkness and error to the pure light of the Gospel. They also set forth the trials and sufferings which the servant of Christ is called to undergo in the profession of His Name.

The Empire of Turkey now engages in an unusual degree the attention of Protestant Christians. Large numbers of the followers of the False Prophet are diligently studying the Word of God. The doctrines of the Koran cease to give satisfaction, and a purer creed is

earnestly sought. In the city of Constantinople itself this is remarkably the case, as well as in other parts of the Ottoman Empire.

It is hoped that the following narrative may serve to deepen the interest which is felt in this hitherto neglected people, and arouse prayer and effort in their behalf. I have been requested to add, that any profit that may accrue to the Author from the sale of the book will be given to the Church Missionary Society.

DANIEL WILSON.

*Islington, April 26, 1860.*

---

## THE OTTOMAN CONVERT.

---

### CHAPTER I.

It is now ten or eleven years ago since a Turk was reading a tract in his own native language in the city of Salonica—that city in which St. Paul had so many Christian converts, whom he called his “glory” and his “joy,” and to whom he addressed his two beautiful Epistles to the Thessalonians, written from Athens. It was then under the sway of the Romans. Centuries afterwards, it was conquered by the Turks, and now forms an important city of European Turkey, in Macedon, at the northern extremity of a large gulf. It is a place of considerable trade, but, like most Turkish towns, in spite of its good situation and commercial capabilities, presents but a dirty and miserable appearance, owing to the inert character of its masters, and its want of good municipal institutions. Its



population is of a very mixed order, including vast numbers of Jews. It was in this ancient city that the subject of the following history, and of God's abounding grace, was located at the time our story begins. His name was Selim. He was employed under the local Government as قسام (Cassoum), that is, a Turkish functionary whose office it is to superintend and administer the property of all orphans within the city, to hold himself responsible for the sale of their effects and the proceeds therefrom arising.

He was married to a countrywoman of his own, and had become the father of three sons, the eldest of whom was then about fifteen, and his wife's sister resided with them. His house was family property, large, commodious, and pleasantly situated. On his conversion to Christianity it was confiscated by the Sultan, and now constitutes the Government Post-office at Salonica. Public stables stand on the spot which was formerly the garden. This man was a serious thinker; his moral sense was strong and active, and although born a Mohammedan, and educated strictly in the doctrines of the false prophet, he had begun to feel their insufficiency and to question their Divine origin. His heart and his intellect alike revolted at the obliquity of their moral rule. He felt all

the evils arising from polygamy, and he determined to have but one wife. He had a religious cast of mind, and this assured him that the system which enslaved and degraded woman debased and demoralized man. It was therefore not a religion high enough in its requirements for him, and his first step in a nobler career was to place as a companion by his side the wife whom he might (consistently with his national faith) have rather regarded as a slave at his feet.

He was in this state of mind when the tract we have mentioned at the outset of this narrative providentially fell into his hands. He read it with deep attention till he came to a part which treated of the insufficiency of repentance as the ground of man's salvation and acceptance with God. It did not enter fully into the matter, but rather glanced at the outlines of the Gospel scheme, and directed him for further information to the *عزیز کتاب*, or Holy Book. The inquiry immediately arose within him, Where was this Holy Book to be found, this hidden treasure of knowledge into which he so longed to dive and satiate his thirsty curiosity? It could not be the Koran, for he had read that through and through, and knew how short it fell of the information his soul desired. However, he

thought he would first seek amongst his own people, and accordingly he went to the Imams, Mollahs, and Turkish priests of every kind. They directed him back to the Koran as the infallible book which came down from heaven—to the fountain which he had exhausted already, and had found it only a broken cistern which could hold no water!

He then sought amongst the different religious communities in the city, the Greek, and Armenian, and Roman Catholic Churches: there he saw nothing but idolatry and superstition—the Jewish synagogue: there he beheld only vociferation and confusion. The well-spring of life eternal was evidently not there: the pearl of great price, for which he was willing to barter all his worldly prosperity, could not surely be hidden under the rubbish of ages.

His conflict of mind became greater. He felt the burden of sin, but as yet saw no glimpse of that Saviour who invites the weary and heavy laden to himself for rest. But he was groping in earnest towards the light; and when did our gracious God ever leave such honest inquirers to lose their way in final darkness? He dealt uprightly with his natural conscience, and the Holy Spirit, if it had not yet descended,

was, dovelike, hovering over it! He began by making sacrifices. There was much in his official functions which jarred with his quickened moral susceptibilities. He resigned his office, and commenced business as a native merchant, and he went on his travels in search of the Holy Book. He visited Smyrna, Constantinople, and other places, but his inquiries were in vain, and he was returning depressed in spirit, and weighed down by the discouragement of that "hope deferred which maketh the heart sick," when, as he was entering the Gulf of Salonica, he met on board the steamer, in which he was a passenger, an agent of the American missionaries, who gave him a Bible in the Armeno-Turkish character, and told him that this was unquestionably the Holy Book, the object of his pilgrimage.

He had a weary task before him,—to learn a new alphabet before he could read the strange letters; but should this discourage him? He, who in Constantinople had in vain attempted to purchase an Armenian Bible, willing to learn a new language in order to read it, and to give for it the sum of 400 piastres—between 3*l.* and 4*l.* sterling!

With joy he accepted the present, and with

patient diligence he sat down to study the difficult characters. And here let us remark the distinguishing grace of God, that it is possible to be awakened, and yet not savingly converted—to be made an instrument of sowing or watering the seed of life in other souls, and yet suffering it to perish in our own. The Armenian who gave him the Bible in the Gulf of Salonica, who discoursed so eloquently about its truth, and further helped him on his Christian path, proved himself a recreant soldier of the Cross of Christ. Although apparently a real convert, it was only his understanding that had been convinced, whilst his heart remained unrenewed. He afterwards fell away from the faith, forgot his first love, and returned into the bosom of that idolatrous Church from whose corruptions he had come out with such apparent sincerity. He was permitted to light the torch for another, but his own was extinguished in darkness!

Happily, it was not so with other instruments employed, to whom this Armenian was the means of introducing Selim, and amongst these was Baron Bedros, a native agent of the American missionaries at Salonica, whose faith stood firm unto the end, and who died a ripened Christian at Constantinople, in July, 1857. He was buried


---

the very day on which the son of Selim embarked for England to complete his education as a Christian missionary. But we are anticipating events in our story.

Months rolled on, and the industrious seeker after truth began to reap the reward of his labours. He began to read the Bible with understanding, and light flashed upon his soul from every precious page. Should he keep this rich privilege to himself, or share his newly-acquired knowledge with the partner of his home, with the children of his love? He did not long hesitate; and though at first he had read it privately, he soon gathered his family around him, and began to read it with them; and well does his son remember the earnest expression of his countenance, as, with hands lifted up in prayer and eyes streaming with tears, he unfolded to them these new and wondrous doctrines. And here we cannot but notice the value of integrity of character in dealing with the ignorant and the unconverted. "Our father has never told us a falsehood in his life," reasoned his children; "he must, therefore, either be right or he must be mad. Now, if he were out of his mind, his conduct would be wild and inconsistent in other matters, whereas we notice he seems only

mad upon this subject, and as prudent and rational as usual in everything else. He must, therefore, believe he is telling us the truth, and only wiser than ourselves in finding it out. Let us listen with attention and respect to lips which have never yet, to our knowledge, uttered a lie!" Having come to this conclusion, his whole family listened to him with wonder, but not complete incredulity, till through his instrumentality they were made partakers of like precious faith with himself.

He led them as far as he could go, but he soon found that he himself needed further instruction; for to the mind of a Turk the humbling doctrines of the Cross present difficulties which can scarcely be conceived by us Christians, brought up from our earliest childhood, step by step, to comprehend them fully. He confessed himself a sinner, and as such he felt his need of a Saviour, but the incarnation of the Son of God, His sufferings as "a man of sorrows," instead of a mighty conqueror, the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity presented to a follower of Islam, who had been taught from his mother's knee to say, as the incontrovertible foundation of all religion, "There is no God but one, and Mohammed is his prophet;"—these were high and sublime mysteries, to him as yet but



partially revealed. He believed with his heart much that was inexplicable to his understanding, and he desired further knowledge.

He heard there were good men at Constantinople, who had come from a far country on purpose to teach these mysteries to his countrymen, and to Constantinople he was determined to go; but in resolving to undertake this adventurous journey, which must end in his declaring himself a Christian, he had to sit down first and count the mighty cost, and ask himself whether his faith were "sufficient to finish it."

But the voice of that Saviour, which had so effectually called him, sounded louder in his ear than any worldly rumour or apprehension; for by this time the report of his change of faith was beginning to get wind in Salonica, and from the effect which it produced there, he could well calculate the fearful consequences which might follow him to the Sultan's capital. He might have to give up not only all his prospects of advancement in life and his good name, but all his earthly property. True, but he had read in the Holy Book, "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" And even should he be required to seal his Christian testimony with his blood, as was




more than probable, at Constantinople, had he not likewise read those decisive words of Christ, "If any man come to me, and hate not his own life also, he cannot be my disciple"?

With the decision which had marked his conduct from the beginning, he hesitated no longer: he set his house in order, committed the care of his business and of his wife and children to the charge of his eldest son—an intelligent but inexperienced youth—and with the Holy Book in his hand, he took his second journey to Constantinople. He had made the most of his one talent, and now, under the guidance of his Heavenly Master, he was on his way to invest it so that it should produce ten.

## CHAPTER II.

NOTHING can exceed the beauty of the approach to Constantinople by sea. The seven-hilled city, with her diadem of mosques and minarets, looking down upon the "Golden Horn" (for so was her harbour called by the ancients, from the wealth of nations which flowed into it), forms one of the most magnificent landscapes in the world. The classic scholar, as his eye glances from the shores of Europe to those of Asia, which a strait no wider than a mighty river here divides, recalls the times of fabulous antiquity, when the winged oracle flew with the measuring line from "the City of Blind Men," the ancient Chalcedon, to the nobler site of Byzantium opposite. The Christian scholar combines in his ideas the legends of antiquity with the dawn of Christian light, and looks with tender interest on the city which was once the Queen of Nations, in the noblest sense, — not only the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, but the first city placed by Imperial mandate under the banner of the

Cross. He anticipates with holy eagerness the time when those mosques shall again become Christian temples, and remarks, with present pleasure, that there are no idols in them to pull down, no Pagan altars to remove. They are spacious, simple, and unincumbered with outward symbols of ceremonial, as his own pure faith. The British subject (if he be patriotic), as he catches sight of the Prince's Islands, the shores of Scutari, and the crest of cypresses on the heights of Pera, is led further still in mournful, and tender, and prophetic meditation. He remembers that his country has bled for that land, that the graves of her soldiers skirt the margin of its silver sea. Should he not also pray that, like the blood of the martyrs, it may prove, in future times, to have been the fruitful seed of the Church? May he not rejoice already, to know that good has sprung out of that great evil; that the Bibles which were so largely scattered during the Crimean war, that the open-air services of the British Army, which were observed by the Turks, when no cross or image was lifted up as an object of adoration, disabused them of their previous notion that all Christians were idolaters, and paved the way for Christian principles to march aggressively and triumphantly into their



midst? But he will but have felt and pondered in vain, if no practical result follow; if he be not willing to lend a helping hand to those Societies and individuals who are labouring for the regeneration of Turkey; if he send up no petition to the throne of the Almighty to hasten forward the hour when the Crescent shall again bow down before the Cross, and Constantinople become in spirit, what she once was in glorious name, under Constantine the Great, the city dedicated to Christ.

This little digression will not be thought irrelevant by those who know how laboriously and successfully our Turk of Salonica is now endeavouring to promote this object amongst his countrymen. But he was then only a docile and diligent pupil, and years passed away before he became the matured disciple, the qualified minister for missionary work.

On his arrival in the capital he obtained an introduction to the American missionaries, who, interested by his story, and struck with its great promise of future usefulness, entered fully into his circumstances, and "expounded to him the way of God more perfectly." They persuaded him to be baptized, to make an open profession of his Christianity, and to send for his wife and family from

Salonica. At the same time, knowing the bloody laws which were then in force against all Mohammedans apostatizing from their religion, they took every precaution for his personal safety, and withstood the strong desire which he had, even at that early period of his conversion, to begin to preach the Gospel to his countrymen. They persuaded him to wait; to repress his zeal for the moment, that it might accomplish more in the issue; and to go on studying the Scriptures, and cultivating his reasoning powers.

In the course of these interviews he went to Bebek, a pretty Turkish village on the Bosphorus, and the head-quarters of the American missionaries, where they have a flourishing college and school. It lies, as in a cradle, between verdant hills (as its Turkish name imports), and is close to the towers which Mohammed II. erected, in the form of his own cipher, on the spot where the Turks first crossed the Bosphorus into Europe. As Selim's return home, after this visit, would have been more dangerous than his stay at Stamboul, he wrote to his son to make arrangements as rapidly as possible for the removal of his family; and this mere boy, collecting together the few things they could take without observation, engaged a passage for himself, his mother,

aunt, and brothers, on board one of the Austrian Lloyd's steamers. A most providential circumstance occurred in his favour on this occasion. After their embarkation in the port, recollecting some trifling articles which were yet wanting, he went back on shore to fetch them, and, on returning to the vessel, found that it had already sailed, and that he was left behind. His distress and perplexity were very great. He pictured to himself his poor mother's consternation at losing his escort, his father's disappointment on meeting them without him, and, to crown his embarrassment, he remembered that he did not know how to find his way on shore at Constantinople, but depended on being met at the moment the Lloyd's steamer arrived. Just as he was brooding over this misfortune, and particularly over the fact of his having no passport, he spied another vessel in the port getting up her steam, and found she was a Government boat, going to Constantinople also. He saw a face on board which was familiar to him, ran up to the man, who proved to be the *cafidgee* (or steward), and entreated him to get him a passage, without a passport, promising to pay for it on his arrival. The *cafidgee*, pitying his distress, smuggled him on board. The Government packet outstripped

her commercial rival, and anchored in the haroour of Constantinople before the other steam-boat arrived. Young Moustapha, to his great joy, beheld his father waiting for him on the quay, and landed in time to assist him in receiving his mother and her party.

As soon as they had left Salonica, and it became known that Selim had turned Christian, the Government confiscated all his property, denounced him as a traitor and a Giaour, and, had he been caught at that time, there is no doubt that he and his family would have been cut to pieces; but he had now adopted the Frank garb, and passed for a stranger amongst the Frank population of the great capital. He was occasionally recognised by old acquaintances, but never betrayed, and the American missionaries, his kind protectors, watched carefully over his safety, and were extremely circumspect, lest the story of his conversion should get wind, and so be talked about at Constantinople.

We have said that everything belonging to him was seized by the Sultan's order, and this, in a free country like England, sounds cruel and oppressive indeed. Yet let it not be thought that the Sovereign of Turkey is a tyrant, although he yielded to religious fanaticism in this matter.

The faults of his disposition lean quite the other way. Neither is he regardless of the lives of his subjects, as many former Sultans have been. In proof of this we may be permitted to relate one anecdote. Some years ago a splendid vessel, bearing the flag of the Capitan Pasha (or Chief Admiral), and one of the finest in the Turkish Navy, blew up by accident, and sunk at mid-day, opposite the Arsenal. A high functionary, in communicating this calamity to Abdul Medjid, who was much distressed at it, spoke of the misfortune of losing such a fine ship. "That loss the wealth of my dominions will easily repair," replied the Sultan; "I can soon build another ship, but what can restore to me the 800 lives which have perished?" As a mark of magnanimity of mind, we might refer to the fact of his presiding at a Council which decided on risking the utmost resentment of his deadly foe, the Russian Czar, rather than give up the Hungarian refugees, who had fled for shelter to his dominions.

Many other instances of his public and private benevolence have transpired. The writer of these pages cannot forget the hospitable reception given to the Kertch Jews during the Crimean war, the large khan appropriated for their residence, and the weekly provision made for their



support. Perhaps the records of the last day can alone reveal the amount of good that may have been done by the Protestant schools opened in that khan; for very touching was the sight of those Jewish children reading the Scriptures in English, and in their native German, and singing the sweet notes of the songs of Zion. Very sweet to an English ear, also, were the strains of our National Anthem from the same young lips, to which the following stanzas for the Sultan were at that time added, and may still, perhaps, be sung in the missionary schools at Constantinople :—

“ God save the Sultan, too ;  
May we pay honour due  
To our liege Lord.  
Bless him whose sceptred hand  
Shelters our little band,  
In this adopted land,  
From hostile sword.

“ Into Truth’s purest way  
Let Thy choice wisdom’s ray  
Guide him at length.  
May he in righteousness  
Rule, and the nations bless  
Who his wide sway confess !  
God, be his strength ! ”

## CHAPTER III.

THE whole family of Selim was now, for a time, settled on the shores of the Bosphorus, under the protection of the good missionaries, who did everything in their power to make this sojourn amongst them profitable, as well as comfortable, to all its members. The boys occasionally visited the Americans. The mother and aunt had ample opportunities of observing the superior usefulness of Christian females, and of learning the craft of good domestic management. The father was employed in deeper subjects, studying the Word of God, and from time to time conversing with such of his countrymen as came to him in secret to learn what wondrous spell had so bewitched his faculties as to change the whole current of his destiny, and prostrate him, as an obedient disciple, at the feet of a greater prophet than Mohammed.

With an ardour of spirit which defied danger he would even then have willingly gone out into the highways of the city to preach his new-found

faith in public, and very difficult it was to hold him back from throwing away his life at the outset of his ministry.

At last the time came when rumours began to rise on every side, and when he could no longer remain in any part of his own country with safety. By the advice of an illustrious individual, to whom Turkey is greatly indebted both for her political and religious progress, it was resolved to send him down to Malta, with his whole family, there to reside for a season. But there were many difficulties in the way. It was impossible to procure a passport for them. The emergency was pressing. A few hours, and all might be lost, for enemies were evidently watching for his life. To risk all became the only chance of saving all, and he and his family were embarked in haste on board the steam-boat *Arabia*, which was to touch at Smyrna on her way.

We may imagine with what outcast feelings this persecuted family left their native land. With what sinking hearts they must have watched that mosque-crowned city, where they had in vain sought a refuge, disappear, till the snowy summit of Olympus also faded from their sight, as the noble British steamer, which had received these

poor exiles into her bosom, swept through the Marmora.

But they soon came in sight of scenes which were calculated to revive their faith, and kindle hope afresh; for they were scenes of Gospel history. As they sailed through the winding Dardanelles, and beheld the plains of Troy, Selim would doubtless be reminded of the Divine power which accompanied the preaching of St. Paul; for it was at Troas that he raised to life the sleeping Eutychus. Might not a new miracle be wrought for him by human instrumentality, if, as he expected, he should be called to encounter fresh peril in the Gulf of Smyrna?

On their arrival at that place the ship was visited by a Turkish functionary, who, finding that Selim and his family had no *teskéré*, ordered them at once on shore into quarantine. In these suspicious circumstances, before further inquiry could be made, they were providentially visited by an old friend, Hadji Mehemet. The Turks are proverbially grateful, and to this man Selim had formerly rendered an important service. He came up to him, therefore, with a mixture of warmth and wonder, and asked him the reason of his undertaking such an extraordinary voyage. "I am going the good way, the way

that God is leading me," answered Selim; "but I am in difficulties, because I left Constantinople without a *teskére*." "God is great," answered his friend; "He will help you in taking this good journey;" and, supposing they were going on pilgrimage to Mecca, he immediately took upon himself the responsibility, with the Turkish authorities, of getting him a passport. This was countersigned by the English Consul, so as to serve for Malta, and the family were permitted to re-embark without further molestation; Hadji Mehemet wishing his friend "God speed" on his religious pilgrimage, which he supposed was to the shrine of Mohammed and not of Christ. That man himself has since become a Christian. He also has entered on that "good way" which leadeth to eternal life.

And now in fancy let us watch our voyagers, with lightened hearts, steaming down the Gulf of Smyrna. Joyfully they have left its castled hill behind, and the city where Polycarp, the martyr, suffered, that early father of the Christian Church, who had conversed with the beloved disciple, once privileged to lean on Jesus' bosom. Picturesque are the mountain peaks receding from their view, with their tints of rose and purple. Now and then a solitary bird dips his wing into the waters,



then skims along towards verdant slopes, where the shepherd's call is sounding, and cypress trees are rising amidst every rich variety of green. Who would think, within sight of a scene so lovely, that our travellers had been driven away by the storms of life? What a contrast, in idea, to those shores bathed in sunshine, where the waters are so smooth, and the skies so bright and blue! But we will leave them doubling Cape Karabornou, at the entrance of the Gulf, and meet them again at Malta.

## CHAPTER IV.

“Is this the impregnable fortress of which I have heard so much?” asks the English traveller, arriving from the more picturesque site of Gibraltar, with a feeling akin to disappointment, as he views the low and rocky isle of Malta first looming on him in the seaward distance. It is not till he enters the fine harbour, till he surveys the lofty and solid bastions, bristling with cannon, that he appreciates the strength and importance of this Mediterranean stronghold of England’s navy. When he lands, and climbs the crag-hewn stairs, his thoughts are involuntarily carried back to other times, when the brave Knights of St. John, after being driven out of Rhodes, made a final stand here for the safety of Christendom, and sustained a siege so fearful that it has scarcely its parallel in the world’s annals.

Little did Solyman the Magnificent, when he first sent his mighty fleet against those Christian guns, anticipate the heroic deeds which Christian faith and patience could inspire, even in that darker

age ! Little did he dream that he was to be ultimately driven back with defeat and disgrace, his career of conquest checked, and the wane of the Ottoman Crescent to commence ! But the Arabia has arrived, and we are going to meet in one of the descendants of his people a Christian knight of Turkish birth, who has buckled on his armour for a better cause ; who has come to this harbour of refuge for a time, but who is destined to go forth again, armed with "the sword of the Spirit," to make nobler conquests over Turks, and defend holier and more important ground, even than the Grand Master of the Knights of Malta.

It was a new scene for Selim when he first landed in a Frank city, and he must have looked around him with wonder and admiration. The order, cleanliness, and military discipline of a garrison town like Valetta must have been very striking to one accustomed to the dirty, narrow streets of Salonica, and the confusing mixture of population at Constantinople, where all sorts of costumes meet the eye, and the sounds of almost all languages grow familiar to the ear. What a new scene also for Zeinab and Ayesha, his wife and sister, and his boys, now fast growing up to manhood, and following willingly the steps of their father's pilgrimage ! But they all had



more important work before them than the gratification of mere idle curiosity. They had to prepare for Baptism; for although Selim had been quite willing to make this outward profession of his Christianity before he left Constantinople, he had not been actually baptized, for several reasons. His friends, the American missionaries, thought it better to defer the celebration of this rite till he could partake of it in common with his family, and it was not, consequently, until after their arrival at Malta that they were formally admitted into the congregation of Christ's visible Church. He then took the name of Edward Williams, and his eldest son was baptized by that of John, after the devoted missionary who perished some years ago in the South Sea Islands. This youth was placed with his brother at the Malta Protestant College, and continued his studies there for three years. He is now in the Church Missionary College at Islington, preparing for missionary work at Constantinople.

We have spoken, in a former part of this narrative, of the difficulties which the dogmas of the Christian religion present to the mind of a Mohammedan. We will now speak of one to which his constitution, and previous training in his own religion, naturally dispose him : a strong

belief in the electing grace of God. To him the doctrine of predestination presents no difficulties. The irreversible decrees of Providence are continually in the mouth of a Turk, and he fashions his conduct in strict conformity to this fundamental article of faith. It produces in him patience in adversity and courage in danger—that calm, stoical courage which, if it does not nerve him to rush impetuously forward, sustains him to hold his post unflinchingly, whenever he thinks it the post either of duty or destiny. (Our officers of both services have had opportunities of observing this on the battle-field and on board ship. A gallant man, who died fighting with the Turks in the late Russian war, summed up their military qualities in these words: “Sobriety, submission, and a great deal of pluck!”) It was this power of endurance which was the grand secret of the Turks’ successful campaign on the Danube. It was this which prevented the fall of Silistria, and which made them die like heroes at Sinope rather than strike their flags, although the contest from the beginning was hopeless! It has carried them so far in obedience to their Sovereign, that a genuine Turk receives the firman of death with as much respect and submission, and as little thinks of evading its execu-

tion, as he would a patent of nobility. He looks upon it as the voice of God, coming only through the instrumentality of man. We are not arguing for the good or the evil resulting from this firm belief in predestination. We are speaking of it only as a distinguishing peculiarity of national character, though, we must add, it is one leading to much consistency of purpose and dignity of deportment.

## CHAPTER V.

OUR Ottoman Convert had now been residing in Malta for three years. During that time he had maintained a consistent profession. His Christian views had become enlarged and his faith consolidated. He had gloried "in tribulation," and tribulation had wrought in him "patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." This hope was not destined to make him ashamed; and because the love of God was shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, it produced, as its invariable fruit, love to his fellow-men. His heart yearned over his benighted countrymen. Like Joseph, he could no longer refrain himself, but determined to go amongst them without further delay, and preach in the great capital of the Turkish Empire "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

Many changes had taken place there in the meantime, and many great events were now concurring to make this undertaking a less perilous and more feasible one. The famous edict called

Khàtt\* Hawàrijjun† had been promulgated, abrogating the law which made death the penalty of apostasy from the national faith. The Protestant Armenians had been recognised by the Porte as a distinct religious community, under the same sort of political convention as its other Christian subjects. The war with Russia had broken out, and two great Christian Powers were fighting as allies in the cause of Turkey—nay, had taken on themselves the chief direction of the war. A decree had been even published in the Turkish mosques, warning the true followers of Islam no longer to exclude from their belief the possibility of a Christian's entering the same heaven as themselves hereafter. If Turks and Christians died together side by side in the battle-field, it was argued, they might certainly hope to partake together of the joys of Paradise. That noble Institution, the British and Foreign Bible Society, was sending out (in ships hired to carry the munitions of war) large supplies of the Gospel of Peace, to be distributed amongst all the nations, thus throwing the leaven of the Word of God into the dense masses which had been set in motion by "the apple of discord." Before the end of the war, even the Sultan on

\* Imperial decrees.

† Apostles of Jesus Christ.

his throne received a Bible, and received it courteously, from the hands of that noble Society!

If we allow that the Crimean war has been very favourable to the progress of true Christianity amongst the Turks, we cannot help being struck with the Providence of God in bringing about this issue, for He not only "makes the wrath of man to praise Him," but overrules the disputes of zealots and idolaters to the promotion of his spiritual worship. We must not forget that one of the ostensible reasons for this war, on the part of Russia, arose from disputes between two professedly Christian nations about certain rights to holy places under the dominion of the Porte, and which she could not settle to the satisfaction of both. In yielding to the demands of the one, she made a deadly enemy for herself in the other. Humbling, therefore, as the consideration may be to us Christians, we must fairly own, that were the question put to Turks, "What think ye of Christ?" as far as their political relations have as yet instructed them, they might fairly answer, "A fruitful source of interminable disputes and divisions." Let us, then, as Protestants, be careful that we show them nothing of this in our missionary undertakings amongst

them; lest they should think Christ is indeed divided, even in his own peculiar family. As yet a beautiful spirit of union has generally prevailed amongst the missionaries at Constantinople, beginning with the good Americans. It was remarked by an excellent clergyman, when a branch of the Evangelical Alliance was about to be established there, "It appears to be almost unnecessary to form a Society on purpose here, for I find it exists already."

Before we leave this subject, may we be permitted to repeat a little anecdote, related to us some years ago by a pious English traveller, returning from an extended journey into the interior. He had been hospitably entertained by a Turkish Pasha, with whom he had been conversing much about European customs and ideas, and on taking leave of him begged his acceptance of a Turkish translation of our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount, observing it was a fair epitome of our religion, and requesting to know the Pasha's opinion of it. "Nothing can be more beautiful," he replied; "but how is it that you Franks are all infidels? You don't believe your religion." "Quite a mistake," replied the traveller; "we have but few infidels amongst us." "Then how is it that more of you do not practise it?"

retorted the Pasha. "We should have been Christians long ago if we had seen a religion like this fairly acted out."

Happily, these objections did not come in the way of our friend, the Turk of Salonica; and what he saw of Christian practice in the little circle of believers with whom he connected himself confirmed and strengthened his principles. He went to reside at Bebek for some time; and as he was anxious not to be more burdensome to them for the maintenance of his family than he could help, he undertook, till he could give himself wholly to the Christian ministry, the superintendence of one of the many schemes of usefulness to the British soldiers, which the good American missionaries set on foot, and which were so much needed at that period, and in that difficult country.

He began preaching also, and conversing with his countrymen as he had opportunity; but fresh danger arising, he went down for some time to reside in Pera, within the precincts of the Dutch Palace, as the Netherlands' Minister—a truly excellent man, of the most Evangelical principles—invited him to do so, both to escape observation and to find security within an asylum, which could not be violated without direct infringement



of diplomatic privileges. Pera, as most of our readers are probably aware, is a suburb of Constantinople, on the crest of a hill opposite that city, the lower part of which lies, as regards the Turkish capital, in the same position as the Borough of Southwark does with respect to the City of London. The word Pera comes from a Greek preposition, signifying beyond, and it has been the winter residence of the foreign Ambassadors, merchants, &c., ever since diplomatic relations were established by Christian countries with the Porte. On one side of the main street the prospect is singularly beautiful, and here the first Dutch palace, which was burned down in the great fire some years ago, was erected. It commands the view of the Seraglio Point, the Prince's Islands, and the chain of Olympus in the distance. On a clear day you can see to the extent of seventy miles. The spot is remarkable also as being the site of the first Protestant Church built in Constantinople. The devouring element which consumed the palace spared the Christian temple, which is still standing, and in which was baptized the infant child of Mr. Williams, born about this time. It was a remarkable event, witnessed with the deepest interest by the congregation present, as, we may almost confidently assert, that this

was the first Turkish babe born of Christian parents in Constantinople. Nor without some memento of religious and political interest to the English worshippers in that Church of God was the fact of their being invited to witness this ceremony in the chapel of the Dutch Legation; for could they pass under the armorial bearings of that gate, and not be reminded by the motto, "Je maintiendrai," of the time when William of Orange, "of glorious memory," won the British crown as his guerdon for assisting England to recover and re-establish on a firmer basis her menaced rights and privileges as a Protestant realm?

The suburb of Pera terminates in an extensive burying-ground for the different nations inhabiting Stamboul; and in order that we may give our readers some notion of Mohammedan ideas respecting departed spirits, we shall close this chapter with a poetical translation of three epitaphs, furnished by a friend, an excellent Turkish scholar, from gravestones situated in the cypress-shaded Moslem cemetery, which crowns and slopes down from the summit of the promontory of Pera.

The first we shall offer is that of a man, and as we are told by the son of our Ottoman convert

that it is not unusual for his countrymen to write their own epitaphs, it was probably the composition of the tenant himself of the grave which it overshadowed. The tombstone was surmounted by a turban, to indicate the gender of its occupant. In more recent times it would have been a fez, the modern Turkish head-dress :—

“ I found no comfort in this troubled world,  
Therefore contented did I pass away ;  
’T was my own wish the sail of death unfurled ;  
No thought arose within my breast to stay.  
Few smile below, and none have cause to smile ;  
The dangers of this world its joys exceed ;  
’Tis but an inn for guests to stop a while ;  
Let him that’s wise to think it more take heed.”

On a Turkish lady’s tomb, surmounted by a crest with flowers, instead of the turban, or fez :—

“ The pure nightingale soul of my love  
From this earth has eternally flown,  
May it pardon and rest find above,  
And to banquet with houris sit down.  
In a handful of earth is the nest  
For all mortal that’s left of her made,  
Till the bright rising morn of the blest  
With heav’n’s sunshine poured down be it ray’d.”

On the tombstone of a little boy, surmounted by a small turban :—

"I was a bird that flew  
Up yonder from the nest ;  
My wings impatient grew  
To leave my parent's breast.  
Forget not then to plead  
For my soul, flown and freed ;  
I, Allah, intercede  
For you !"

## CHAPTER VI.

WE shall now take leave of Selim, and say only a few more words about him as Mr. Williams, a name under which he is already known to some of the readers of our Christian periodicals. He has gone steadily on, waxing stronger and stronger in his Christian course. He has been regularly ordained as a preacher of the Gospel, and is now the pastor of a Protestant Church at Constantinople, numbering sixty native communicants. We will not say how many hearers besides, for his labours are not confined to one special locality; and when we hear of 1,000 Turks reading the Bible, and 30,000 inquirers after Christian truth, we may well refer our readers to other and more enlarged accounts of his ministerial successes than we are able to give in this little sketch.

We only proposed to delineate the small and wondrous beginnings of the work of grace, the results of which, we trust, will extend over a period of many years to come, and find a better

and abler chronicler when they have gloriously ended.

Our object has been to use the many opportunities of information which a long and happy residence in his country has afforded us to awaken (from the exhibition of this promising specimen) an interest with the Christian public in favour of the Turks; and, with such well-organized Societies existing, to carry out missionary efforts, we need not point out the way in which Christian interest can be most advantageously displayed.

We have often heard it said, in years past, what excellent people the Turks would make if they were only Christians, for they have so many good elements of character to work upon, and so little to *unlearn*. We are speaking of the native, unsophisticated block of Turkish character, as it should come under the chisel of Christ's Word, not as it appears when it has been chipped into every variety of shape by the conflicting influences of the saloons of London, Paris, Vienna, and St. Petersburg, till its native, simple "line of beauty" is defaced, and it looks like a figure of awkward angles! Let us examine it a little. The Turks are naturally sober, honest, and truthful. If we add obstinate and dogmatic,

are not these elements of good or evil, just as they are moulded for right or wrong purposes? They are remarkable for filial respect, and reverence for age, which they think synonymous with wisdom. No young Turk will sit in the presence of his father or superior, and if polygamy has broken up the comfort of their domestic hearths, and prevented their finding out their duties to their wives, they have such deep affection for their mothers that it is a common saying, "If a son could carry his mother on his shoulders all the way to Mecca, he could never repay her the obligations he owes her." This feeling extends up to the Sultan himself, for the title Validé Sultana (Sultan's mother) has generally been accompanied with unbounded, and often undue political influence over him.

They are naturally fond of children, and kind to animals. A Turk likes to think that, even in his grave, the little birds will be able to come and sip their fill of water at his tombstone, and has a small cavity hollowed out for them on purpose. They are punctual and regular in their religious duties, although they have no images or pictures before which to prostrate themselves. The Pasha, in the midst of transacting important worldly business at the Porte, is not ashamed to interrupt it,

when the muezzin calls the hour for devotion from a neighbouring mosque, and his attendants spread his prayer carpet as a thing of course. To be convinced of their patience and power of self-denial, we have only to point to the poor boatmen on the Bosphorus, rowing hard at the end of a long Ramazan fast-day, when from sunrise to sunset they have religiously abstained from a sup of water, or what is more to them, a single whiff of their coveted chibouque. They are fond of simple pleasures, flowers, fine views, and quiet reveries in delicious scenery. Too indolent, and too dreamy, they are difficult to arouse to active exertion or stirring enterprise for any motive short of religion, and then they become fanatical; but what might we not expect could this fanaticism be changed for Christian zeal, since it has been said already by one of themselves, "Only make a Turk think earnestly, and you have half made him a Christian."

So much for them as individuals. Now, considered as a nation, we are told by some Scripture commentators, who profess to discover confidently "the times and the seasons" in the pages of prophecy, that they are destined to pass away as a governing people; but we would fain see another phase in "the drying up of the



Euphrates." We cannot quite look upon them as a nation whose "measure of iniquity is full," and which is therefore to be removed out of God's sight, for we remember many things of them to which promises, and not threatenings, are attached, in the Divine and immutable Word. They have never been amongst those who have persecuted the ancient people of God, but who have hospitably and compassionately received them. Let us go back to the rise of the Inquisition in Spain, and ask where the bulk of those fugitive Jews took refuge when driven forth from their homes by the persecuting edicts of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic?

They have been dogmatic in their own religion, but they have established no inquisition to force conversion on their Christian subjects. With a spirit of tolerance very different from Roman Catholic Governments, they have freely admitted religious books and religious men from other lands to work amongst them. They have permitted the erection of Christian Churches, and it has not been their fault if the form of Christianity set forth in them has been a faulty and imperfect one. Had it been purer, they might have been won to Christ long ago! They have received political exiles from all countries, and, in

consequence, the worst crimes committed in their own are seldom traceable to native Turks.

We conclude this little account of them, and of "the Ottoman Convert," with the fervent prayer that there may be many such amongst them to form the subjects of a Christian empire hereafter ! May they, as a nation, become partakers of that true faith which alone realizes their mistaken notion of Islamism, as "the religion which gives peace of mind;" remain true Moslems, if we accept the word in its native derivation, "a religion which has no like;" and continue followers of Mohammed, if they will, in the original sense his name imports, "Engaged in praise !"

## CONCLUSION.

### I.

STAMBOUL, wake! Imperial city,  
Rise, and welcome Christ once more;  
On thy tottering State have pity,  
As thy Saviour Him adore.  
Star and Crescent,  
Round Him all your radiance pour!

### II.

You have but fulfilled your mission,  
Harbingers of coming day;  
Scattering darker superstition,  
First arose your prophet's sway.  
Star and Crescent,  
Now his rule must pass away!

### III.

For a brighter orb is gleaming,  
His victorious course to run;  
Rays of glory from Him streaming  
Tell of palms already won.  
Star and Crescent,  
Bow before the rising Sun!

## IV.

Though merged in his higher splendour,  
Yours you never will regret ;  
He will back your empire render !  
You 'll from Him fresh glory get.  
Star and Crescent,  
Though eclipsed you 'll never set !

## V.

Only hail the Cross above you ;  
Shine in its pure Gospel light ;  
Make both those who hate and love you  
Now to marvel at the sight.  
Star and Crescent,  
Be a Christian banner\* bright !

\* It is a remarkable fact that the Sultan of Turkey's Insignia already appear amongst those of the Christian knights in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, as the result of the Crimean war.

**LONDON: WERTHEIM, MACINTOSH, AND HUNT,  
24, PATERNOSTER-ROW,  
AND 23, HOLLES-STREET, CAVENDISH-SQUARE.**





7



